

Notes and Letters

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Locating Russian Materials on Food and Food Technology

NOT MUCH IS KNOWN in the United States about progress in Russia in the food and food technology fields. That there is considerable activity in the various food areas is, however, evident from the output of research, technical and specialized literature. The difficulties of the language and the scarcity in American libraries of Russian food publications are doubtless the chief reasons for our slight grasp of Russian contributions. It may come as a surprise to food technologists that the subject index of the Library of Congress *Serial Publications of the Soviet Union, 1939-1957* (2) lists at least 96 different titles that clearly reflect specialized food interests. Yet the list shows that only 38, or roughly one third, are held even in part in American libraries. These holdings would make even less of a showing if only fairly complete sets were counted. Since this total of 96 does not include the journals which could be considered at least partly in the food field, and none of those in agriculture, chemistry, chemical engineering and medicine, all of which print some articles of interest to the food scientist and technologist, it is not a complete picture but it does show that specialized materials which could be of real importance are not generally available.

DISTRIBUTION IS LIMITED

The distribution of the 38 titles indicates another difficulty. The Library of Congress has at least 32 of them, while 22 are found in the Library of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Other libraries having materials are largely on the Atlantic seaboard, although a few are in California. Only two titles (one on canning in a college library, and one on tea in a university library) are recorded for the Middle West; none are listed in libraries in the South. Nine titles are held by the New York Public Library, and three are at the Columbia University Library. Harvard, which has one of the outstanding collections of Russian materials, has three titles; while Yale with another good collection has none. Cornell University reports three titles out of the list. On the Pacific Coast the University of California at Berkeley holds eight titles, the Hoover Library at Leland Stanford University three, and two are found at the University of California at Los Angeles.

CLASSIFICATION DIFFICULTIES

An indication that the materials held in the United States tend to the basic background, rather than to the applied aspects, is also found in the subject headings assigned to the various titles. It should be remembered that subject headings given for titles not in the United States were assigned from the titles of the serials and not from actual inspection of the contents. Of the four titles given under the broad heading of

"Food" all are held in the United States, one by five different libraries. Of the 19 titles listed under "Food Industry and Trade" only three are held in the United States, the Library of Congress having all three and the U. S. D. A. Library two. This leaves 16 titles not held that seem to be on the food trade in general. One title which was classified as "Food Research" was held by two libraries, one being the Library of Congress and the other Cornell University. Of three titles under "Nutrition" two are held in the United States, one title by 8 different libraries. Only two of the 10 titles recorded as dealing with meat are held in American libraries, but one of these is held by 8 different libraries. Of the five titles listed under "Sugar, Manufacturing and Refining," four are held in the United States, one by 9 different libraries. The 8 entries under "Beets and Beet Sugar" were not analyzed because it was not possible to tell which related to the agricultural and which to the food industry aspects.

Russian journals covering the pure sciences are more widely distributed in the United States, and certain of them are translated regularly under the sponsorship of some of the learned societies, with funds in part supplied by governmental sources. Although many of the articles so translated are basic to the work of the food technologist they do not include the more specialized reports which could be of even greater interest.

There has been, of course, an effort on the part of the Library of Congress and the U. S. D. A. Library to select for their collections the most important journals in the fields covered. This could lead to a supposition that the third of the total production relating to food held by these two libraries represents the most important contributions, but since the other titles are not available it is not possible to check on this assumption. In any event those journals which are held have a possibility of use through published indexes.

Mention should be made at this point of a new, additional source for obtaining information on the names and specific coverage of Russian journals in food science and technology. The *Bibliography of Food*, compiled by two British authors, E. Alan Baker and D. J. Foskett, and published in the U.S.A. by the Academic Press Inc., New York, contains a selected list of bibliographies, journals, and organizations devoted to food investigations. Russia and the satellite countries appear to be well represented. The book is just off the press at the time of this writing and has not been examined studiously.

TOOLS FOR LOCATING RUSSIAN MATERIALS

Tools for locating materials in the Russian language serials, at least those held in the United States, are

fairly numerous. The Library of Congress issues the *Monthly Index of Russian Acquisitions* (5) which not only lists the titles of all articles in the journals received, but also includes entries for books and monographs, even including some for items that are not held by American libraries. This monthly index is quite complete and detailed, particularly from the subject point of view, but it is not cumulated so that it is necessary to check each monthly issue as a separate when making a literature search.

Because of the number of Russian titles held by the Library of the U. S. Department of Agriculture the *Bibliography of Agriculture* (4) regularly contains references to many articles, as well as to books and separates, of interest to workers in the food field. In addition the list of translations, which appears in each issue, includes a record of any translations from Russian in the food field.

Translations of Russian articles and books were formerly listed in the *Bibliography of Translations of Russian Scientific and Technical Publications* (6) issued by the Library of Congress. This publication was, however, discontinued at the end of 1956 and combined with the *Translation Monthly* (3) published by a Committee of the Special Libraries Association at the John Crerar Library in Chicago. The number of translations in the food and food technology fields, as might be expected from the limited number of Russian journals held in the United States, has not been great but many of those listed are held by the translation center and are available for loan or copying.

Various abstract services pay considerable attention to Russian materials. Both *Chemical Abstracts* and *Biological Abstracts* should be consulted for materials of interest because they index the Russian journals in the pure sciences which have basic articles, even though their coverage of the specialized journals is not extensive. *Chemical Abstracts* issued in 1956 a *List of Periodicals Abstracted by Chemical Abstracts* (1) which also notes which libraries receive the titles. This list is not, however, as complete a record of holdings as the one issued by the Library of Congress.

FOOD ABSTRACTS NOT A SPECIALIZED SERVICE IN RUSSIA

Much has been reported in the press about the activities of the All-Union Institute of Scientific and

Technical Information (Institut nauchnoi informatskii of Akadademii nauk SSSR) which publishes twelve abstract journals with a common title of *Referativnyi Zhurnal*. Those for chemistry and biochemistry would probably cover certain of the basic sciences for the food technologist but there does not seem to be any abstract service which would include the specialized subjects of food and food technology. While these services have been operating for only a few years there seems to be a number of subscriptions in the United States with the Khimiya section being recorded for 13 libraries for the maximum of those which might have a relationship to the food fields.

LITERATURE CITED

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